



PSC NEWS

Missouri Public Service Commission

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PSC SETS HEARING SCHEDULE IN REQUEST TO PROVIDE 2-1-1 SERVICE

Jefferson City (March 22, 2004)---The Missouri Public Service Commission will hearings in June in a request filed by The Heart of America United Way, Inc. which is seeking Commission authority to be a 2-1-1 service provider in SBC Missouri exchanges in 16 western Missouri counties (Andrew, Buchanan, DeKalb, Clinton, Caldwell, Platte, Clay, Ray, Jackson, Lafayette, Cass, Johnson, Saline, Pettis, Bates and Henry).

Hearings are scheduled for June 9-10, 2004, in the Commission's offices located in the Governor Office Building, 200 Madison Street, in Jefferson City. The Governor Office Building is a facility which meets the accessibility standards of the Americans With Disabilities Act. If any person needs additional accommodations to participate in these hearings, please call the Public Service Commission's Hotline at 1-800-392-4211 (voice) or Relay Missouri at 711 prior to the hearings.

In February 2004, the Public Service Commission approved and filed with the Secretary of State an emergency rule providing the framework for establishing 2-1-1 telecommunications service in Missouri. The emergency rule also contains requirements for an organization to be designated as a 2-1-1 provider.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) previously designated 2-1-1 as a national abbreviated dialing code for community information and referral services. The intent is to provide callers with direct access to organizations capable of making referrals to services such as housing assistance, counseling and hospice services that are not currently available through the 911 emergency code.

In order for 2-1-1 service to be provided in an area of the state, the information and referral service provider would need to file an application and have that application acted upon by the Public Service Commission.

Under the emergency rule, a customer will not be charged by either the telephone company or the 2-1-1 provider for using the service.

When available in their area of the state, the abbreviated dialing code (2-1-1) will enable callers to connect with an information and referral provider without having to dial a seven or ten digit telephone number. Under the emergency rule, an information and referral provider is an organization which would act as an intermediary, matching the person with the necessary combination of human services that will address the individual's needs.

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